



**DOWNTOWN  
LONG BEACH  
ALLIANCE**

## Economic

## Development

## Committee Members

Sam Pierzina – Chair

Sheva Hosseinzadeh - Vice  
Chair

Graham Gill

Sheila Hosseinzadeh

Ingrid Martin

Ashleigh Stone

Justin Wolske

Eric Romero

Nigel Lifsey

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, November 11, 2020

Start Time: 9:00 A.M.

End Time: 10:00 A.M.

**Voting Present:** Sam Pierzina, Sheva Hosseinzadeh, Sheila Hosseinzadeh, Ingrid Martin, Justin Wolske, Ashleigh Stone, Graham Gill, Nigel Lifsey

**Voting Absent:** Eric Romero

**DLBA Staff:** Austin Metoyer, Mo Mills, Kelsey Mader

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS – Sam Pierzina, Chair  
[Meeting presentation](#). Meeting called to order at 9:01 AM.
2. Welcome New Committee Member: Nigel Lifsey
3. **ACTION ITEM: Approve minutes from [October 14, 2020](#), Economic Development Committee Meeting**  
**MOTION: 1<sup>st</sup>: Sheva Hosseinzadeh. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Sheila Hosseinzadeh.**  
**VOTE: None opposed. Stone and Lifsey abstain. Motion passes.**
4. Staff Report – Austin Metoyer, Economic Development & Policy Manager 5 mins
  - Presented slide 4.
  - Metoyer reminded the Committee of the Long Beach Quarterly Economic Forum which is usually held in person on an annual basis. Since the pandemic, the event is now held virtually and on a quarterly basis.
  - The Downtown Discussion Webinar was reintroduced. The upcoming Webinar will cover how to reimagine public space and in the context of COVID-19 and equity on December 4 at 10am. Mo Mills and Sam Mehlinger have worked together to gather speakers and moderators.
  - a. Woman-Owned Business Accelerator Grant Update
    - This program started about 4 years ago and is done in partnership with Cal State Long Beach's Institute for Innovation Entrepreneurship. The goal is to support women business owners and entrepreneurs in DTLB by providing grant funding and business development services to help them grow and expand their business.
    - During 2019-20 the committee was able to secure \$90,000 from Farmers & Merchants for a 3-year commitment which provides \$30k each year; \$10,000 for WOBA and \$20,000 for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Grant Program.
    - The WOBA Grant received 13 applications, but 3 did not qualify because they were not in the district. The selection committee met on October 26 to review all applications and determine who should move forward as finalists. The selection committee looked at the uniqueness of each business, their business models and how grant funding will help them to expand their business.
    - The award package will include a split of \$10,000 between the three businesses, a 4-part workshop series that is covered by the Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and up to 5 months of one-on-one business development advisement provided by Kena Fuller with Fuller Management.



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5. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Sam Pierzina, Chair 55 mins
- a. Brief Update on Follow-up with Rebecca Kauma
  - b. 2020 Woman-Owned Business Accelerator Finalist Presentations
    - i. Crystal Early, 3 Women Vintage – [Presentation](#)
      - 3 Women is a women-owned sustainable fashion brand in the East Village Arts District of Downtown Long Beach valuing community, serving others, inclusivity and making genuine connections.
      - Crystal Lee Early designs the clothing line and provides creative direction for the brand while Natalie Mumford works behind the scenes focusing on marketing, sales, and content creation.
      - 3 Women makes their clothing from vintage textiles, specifically rice, flour, and feed sack fabrics. This is a made to order, made to measure custom clothing collection.
      - The main issue 3 Women is running into is that the cost of production and cost of goods are too high. The solution is to establish a middle market product to generate a higher net profit and offer a more affordable product for the average consumer.
      - Pierzina asked if they plan to continue mostly online operations as they have been throughout the pandemic or return to a more in-person experience once COVID-19 passes. Mumford said ecommerce makes more sense for long term, and though she wants to incorporate in person shopping, it likely will not return to what it used to be.
      - Wolske asked what the typical customer is like. Early shared that the customer wants something unique that is going to last. The fabric has proven it will last because it has already lasted 100 years.
      - Sheila Hosseinzadeh asked if they took advantage of the Paycheck Protection Program Loan (PPP) or the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). 3 Women has not.
    - ii. Maggie Stoll, Burke Mercantile – [Presentation](#)
      - Burke Mercantile started in Fall of 2017, and opened its first Brick & Mortar space in April 2018. Its main focuses are on sustainability, contemporary design, and advocacy.
      - Stoll acknowledged the extensive vintage options throughout Downtown but felt there was a lack of contemporary modern sustainability.
      - Burke Mercantile has a conscious consumer base, most of which is based in Long Beach with Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco showing a lot of interest as well.
      - Burke Mercantile is a single employee business, so the pandemic caused severe challenges. Nonetheless, Stoll saw revenue growth and return customer rates increase throughout the year.
      - Stoll explained that any funding received would go to a stockroom buildout, digital advertisements, talent for content creation, and funding to support inventory purchases.
      - Pierzina inquired about where the stockroom buildout would go. Stoll explained that there is an area that already exists in the space being used as a fitting room. Minimal construction is needed.
      - Gill asked about the status of the lease. Stoll is currently month-to-month since she has been there more than a year now. She prefers to stay in her current space before making any moves.
    - iii. Orsa Modica, Modica's Deli – [Presentation](#)



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- Modica's is in the Historic Cooper Arms Building and offers Italian style dining inspired by family recipes.
- Before COVID-19, Modica's held art and music events but no longer can because of new health orders.
- The pandemic has had several negative impacts, some of which include staff injury increase, added cost of PPE, and moving the business from 80% indoors to 100% outdoors. Despite this, Modica has seen a positive shift towards community bonding.
- Grant funding would go towards creating a new, permanent parklet or transforming the current parklet into a permanent one.
- Sheva Hosseinzadeh expressed her concern over the cost of creating a new permanent parklet at approximately \$56,000, then inquired about the cost for the option to make the temporary parklet permanent. Modica explained the different criteria that need to be met when creating a permanent parklet which causes the cost to increase.
- Gill asked about the potential to get assistance from the landlord toward funding the parklet. Modica and Hosseinzadeh explained that that is not an option available at this time.
- Committee Discussion on Finalists
  - Metoyer presented the selection committee's recommendation for distributing the money as follows: \$5,000 to Modica's Deli, \$2,500 to 3 Women, and \$2,500 to Burke Mercantile.
  - Pierzina and Metoyer reviewed the sponsorship from Farmers & Merchants and why the WOBA grant is receiving \$10,000. This is how the agreement was signed, but can potentially be changed in future years to adjust the allocations.
  - Metoyer discussed the potential of the DLBA providing parklet grant funding which may help Modica's if this comes to fruition.
  - Stone discussed the idea of impact on each business, therefore suggested more funding go to 3 Women and Burke Mercantile rather than Modica's Deli. Lifsey added that one of Modica's parklet options is to transform the current temporary parklet into a permanent one, and for this the cost is still unknown but may be more affordable than the \$56,000 option presented.
  - After further discussion, most of the committee prefers that the \$10,000 be split equally three ways.

**ACTION ITEM: APPROVE SELECTED FINALIST FOR WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS ACCELERATOR GRANT**

**MOTION: 1<sup>ST</sup>: Sheva Hosseinzadeh. 2<sup>ND</sup>: Stone.**

**VOTE: None opposed, no abstentions. Wolske not present for vote. Motion passes.**

6. Old Business
  7. New Business
  8. Public Comment (Three minutes on all non-agenda items)
  9. Adjournment
- Meeting adjourned at 10:25 AM.

*Mission: Cultivate, preserve and promote a healthy, safe and prosperous Downtown*

